

# Next FOOD

EDUCATING THE NEXT GENERATION  
OF PROFESSIONALS IN THE AGRIFOOD SYSTEM

## D8.2 – Data protection

WP8 – Ethics



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### 1.1 Executive summary

This document is a collection of the NextFood “Ethics Policy” deliverables 8.1 (use of humans in research), 8.2 (protection of personal data) and 8.3 (third partner countries). The overall aim of NEXTFood is to generate an innovative European science and education road map for sustainable agriculture along the value chain from research via fabrication into application. Within NEXTFood we will employ systems approaches, in which the farmers and other supply chain actors involved are seen as important actors and co-creators of knowledge. This will challenge the linear view of knowledge transfer as a top-down process from researchers down to advisors and practitioners. The project will involve several phases of research, each of which will be planned in accordance with high standards of research ethics. This document reports how potential ethical issues in the NextFood project will be identified and taken into consideration by the partners involved in the research activities and the data collection and storage.

### 1.2 Introduction

NEXTFood will employ case-based action research to develop relevant and effective education and training programs for a transition to more sustainable agrifood and forestry systems. Research will be performed on qualitative and quantitative data generated during the case development process. In addition, we will analyze data collected in a broader context by using data from questionnaires. Key ethical issues concerning the planned research activities are recruitment of participants, information to participants and informed consent during the planned research activities. Moreover, fair benefit sharing with non-EU low and middle income partners and protection of personal data is taken into consideration. This document reflects the commitment of the NextFood research group to conduct responsible and socially acceptable research. It describes how we deal with ethical issues that will or may arise while completing the different tasks of the project and demonstrates how our research is in line with international, EU and national laws. The Management Team will be responsible for overseeing ethical issues throughout the project, and will consult institutional ethics committees whenever necessary.

Compliance with research ethics is an integral part of the research in the NEXTFood project. Project partners are bound by the requirements to adhere to best practice regarding ethical standards and contemporary processes as they may evolve over the period of the project (c. 2018 to 2023). The processes and approach to ethical

clearance in NEXTFOOD comply with the guidance in Regulation (EU) 1291/2013, 11 December 2013, establishing the Horizon 2020, Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020), as set out by in the Official Journal of the European Union, Article 19 on ethical principles (European Parliament, 2013). Of particular relevance to NEXTFOOD are the principles of:

- proportionality,
- the right to privacy,
- the right to the protection of personal data,
- the right to the physical and mental integrity of a person,
- the right to non-discrimination,
- the need to ensure high levels of human health protection.

Research activities will be required to meet the following:

1. Research will be designed, reviewed and undertaken to ensure integrity, quality and transparency.
2. Research participants and staff will be informed fully about the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the research, what their participation in the research entails and what risks, if any, are involved.
3. The confidentiality of information supplied by research participants and the anonymity of respondents will always be respected.
4. The independence of the research will be clearly set out, and any conflicts of interest or partiality will be made explicit.

The NEXTFOOD Consortium Agreement includes a requirement for all Partners to strictly adhere to the ethical standards and guidelines of Horizon2020, regardless of the country in which the research is carried out. It includes reference to processes for the collection of personal data.

The Project Plans for each Task in the Project Management Plan will identify whether there is a likelihood of requiring ethical clearance for the activities proposed. The assessments will be reviewed as the project evolves, and monitored by the Executive Board, through the WPLs. For those activities for which ethical clearance will be required the responsibility for the conduct of the research rests with the lead investigator of the activity. The relevant Task and WP Leaders will ensure that the activity has the appropriate ethical clearance. Such clearance will normally be through a partner's institutional ethical procedures. If there are no such procedures, those of the most relevant Task or WP Leader will be followed. In the absence of a relevant procedure, the process of the Coordinating organisation, SLU, will be used. Guidelines on best practice will be followed, as published by the most relevant professional body or public agency. As a general guide, NEXTFOOD partners will follow the UK Economic and Social Research Council Research Ethics Guidebook ([www.ethicsguidebook.ac.uk/Consent-72](http://www.ethicsguidebook.ac.uk/Consent-72)). The project Data Management Plan will set out the principles, processes and requirements for ensuring data protection, whilst pursuant of a general project policy of research being Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (FAIR).

### 1.3 Application area

The procedures and criteria specified in this document shall be applied by all partners in NextFood and for all procedures of data acquisition involving subjects external to the Project Consortium in a non-anonymous form. Each partner supervises and checks the work performed by its own staff in accordance with this document.

### 1.4 Protection of personal data

NextFood will comply with the General Data Protection Regulation, GDPR, for collection, storing and managing research data (Regulation 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC). NextFood researchers will collect personal data, such as names, farm identities and addresses. No sensitive data, however, such as that on health, sexual lifestyle or the religious conviction of people will be collected. No personal data that is not necessary to achieve the research task will be collected. NextFood will make sure that data collected in the project is protected by adequate organizational and technical arrangements. These arrangements will be of such kind that it will ensure an appropriate security level in relation to the risks of collecting and storing the data.

The personal data will be de-identified and coded before shared outside the immediate project team. Similarly, the questionnaire respondents will be coded before sharing any data between partners to make sure that anonymity is ensured in the electronic documents. Personal details and responses to questionnaire will be held separately on password protected computers at each national responsible centre. Names and contact details will not be passed to anyone other than members of the local research team. Hard copies such as interview notes, prints of photographs, or video or audio tapes will be kept securely locked away and only accessible to the members of the team who conduct the research. No personal data will be transferred to non-EU countries.

According to the GDPR each participant will be informed of their rights to

- 1) access personal data
- 2) change personal data in the database
- 3) request that your personal data be erased from the database
- 4) restrict processing of personal data for certain purposes.

#### *Compliance with the General Data Protection regulation (onwards GDPR)*

A statement from the designated Data Protection Officer (or manager with corresponding responsibility in the organization) that all personal data collection and processing will be carried out according to EU and national legislation has been collected from all partners and is kept on file. When relevant, information has been added on additional national regulations that partners will comply with.

## 1.5 Open research data pilot

NextFood is an open data pilot, which means that data generated within the project is that the research data is free to access, reuse, repurpose, and redistribute. The Open Research Data Pilot aims to make the research data generated by Horizon 2020 projects accessible with as few restrictions as possible, while at the same time protecting sensitive data from inappropriate access. This will be described in a data management plan.